

TheMackinac

PUBLICATION OF THE SIERRA CLUB'S MICHIGAN CHAPTER • SPRING/SUMMER 2022

People Who Make The Difference

By Gail Philbin, Chapter Director

Larry Bell gives me hope. This small business owner and famed Kalamazoo brewer stared down the oil transport giant Enbridge and made it blink.

When the Canadian corporation selected Comstock Township as the place to dump toxic dredge from the cleanup of its 2010 pipeline rupture along the Kalamazoo River, the Bell's Brewery founder sued Enbridge for not having permits, forcing it to halt the dumping operations that threatened to pollute water and air near his brewery.

Larry, a former Sierra Club volunteer, didn't stop there. He went on to help create and lead the Great Lakes Business Network five years ago, spearheading the campaign among Michigan businesses to shut down Enbridge's Line 5 in the Straits of Mackinac. Larry's engagement is part of the reason Sierra Club and the Oil & Water

Don't Mix coalition have been able to keep Enbridge scrambling to legally defend the operation of the aging, spill-prone Line 5 in Michigan waters.

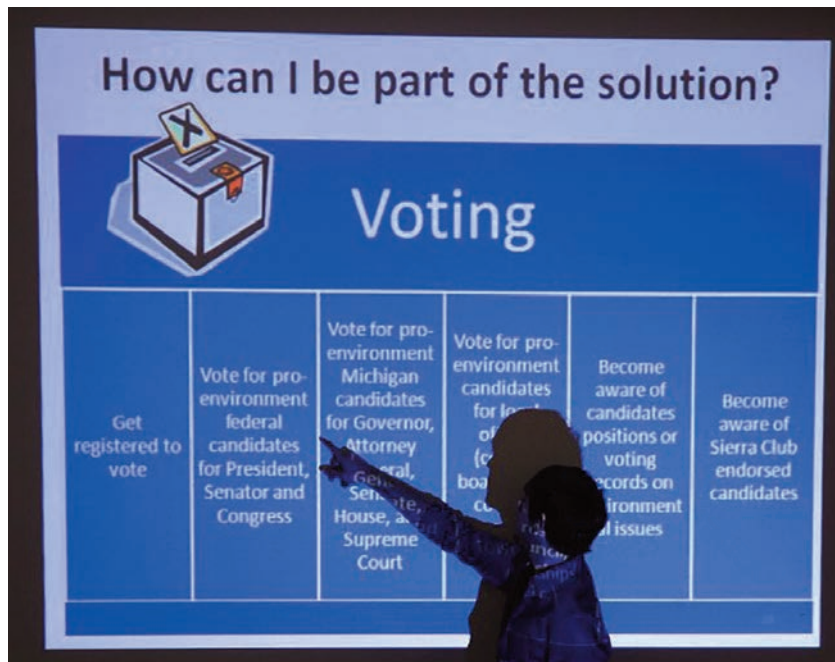
The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter honored Larry for his work with its Environmentalist of the Year Award in a virtual ceremony on Feb. 5 that also recognized the environmental achievements of 15 other organizations and individuals who helped in 2021. (See p. 13.)

Our annual awards ceremony is one of the most important

things we do all year because it underscores the strength it takes to win environmental battles. Sometimes we need a David-and-Goliath spirit to take on a good fight, despite the size of the foe. Our awards spotlight the volunteers helping to make positive change in Michigan. These stories about folks like you and me

making a difference need to be told more than ever now, when so much seems out of our control, to remind us what we can accomplish when we work together.

In the pages of this issue, you can read about our Line 5 campaign and our other efforts to tackle fossil fuel dependence by pushing utilities and municipalities to move beyond coal and natural gas to clean energy. We'll also tell you about our work on urban green infrastructure, environmental justice and forest biodiversity and how we're gearing



Sierra Club is ramping up its pro-democracy efforts during this critical midterm election year. Learn more on pp. 10-11.

up our political and legislative programs in this critical midterm election year.

Without a functioning democracy, none of our policy solutions will make it through Michigan's pro-industry state legislature. The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is investing heavily in pro-democracy efforts this year and working closely with partners across the state to protect everyone's right to vote and have their vote counted in free and fair elections.

We need all hands on deck in this fight. Please join us.



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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.

TheMackinac

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2022

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Love For People Motivates Our Work

By Abby Clark, Michigan Chapter Chair



Abby Clark
Michigan Chapter Chair

As an incorrigible procrastinator, I put off writing this, unsure what could be most valuable to share from my new seat as Michigan Chapter Chair (a title that feels undeserved as it is). But my worst impulses were rewarded yet again when my subject suddenly became clear while watching the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Awards Ceremony on Feb. 5.

The prospect of yet another Zoom – on a Saturday, no less – seemed less than alluring. But from the moment I logged on, I couldn't stop smiling. The names and faces of so many wonderful people who work so hard and do so much, celebrating each other, made any cynicism or fatigue melt away.

The beautifully run and thoughtfully compiled event was such a valuable reminder that our organization and our work is about people. There's a common misconception amongst those outside our movement that environmentalists care about trees or polar bears instead of people and that couldn't be further from the truth.

Everyone I know doing this challenging work day in and day out, paid or unpaid, is motivated by their deep love for people - their neighbors, their friends, their colleagues and even people in faraway places they'll never meet. The dedication expressed during the awards ceremony left me genuinely moved and motivated, full of gratitude for every presenter and honoree.

So thank you, to every single one of you involved in this organization—I'm so honored and grateful to be a part of this work with you!

This poem brings to mind our staff, volunteers, and allies—I'm in awe of your work and dedication.

To Be of Use

By Marge Piercy

*The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
They seem to become natives of that element,
the black sleek heads of seals
bouncing like half-submerged balls.*

*I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
who do what has to be done, again and again.*

*I want to be with people who submerge
in the task, who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.*

*The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.*

Chapter Endorses National Sierra Club Board Candidates

The Michigan Chapter recommends a vote for Aaron Mair, Allison Chin, Cheyenne Branscum, Kate Bartholomew and Maya Khosla in the upcoming election for the Sierra Club's Board of Directors.

Nominations Being Accepted for Chapter Executive Committee

Each fall Sierra Club members in Michigan elect members of the Michigan Chapter Executive Committee, the governing body overseeing the work of Sierra Club in Michigan. In 2022, five two-year at-large seats on the Executive Committee are up for election. Members can seek nomination in one of two ways: 1) by requesting consideration by the Nominations Committee or 2) by submitting a petition with the signatures of at least 50 Michigan Sierra Club members no later than August 8. If you are interested in running, please contact the Nominations Committee ASAP to discuss the steps to take to become a candidate for an Executive Committee seat. Email the Nominations Committee at nominations.committee@michigan.sierraclub.org or send a request by mail to Nominations Committee, Sierra Club, 109 E. Cesar Chavez Ave., Lansing, MI 48906 for more information.

THINK GLOBALLY, AND GET ACTIVE WITH YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB GROUP!

Sierra Club is the largest grassroots environmental organization in the country, and the Michigan Chapter's 6 regional Groups and Committees host outings, political and conservation activities, and informational programs. Members and supporters are invited to attend outings and meetings — everyone is welcome! For inquiries about activities in your area, you can also contact gail.philbin@sierraclub.org.



Sometimes people participate in a Chapter Group other than the one serving the county in which they live. If this is true for you, it's important we have this information because 1) Groups get funds based on their member numbers, and 2) Groups send info to their members through lists based on their member home addresses. To change your designated Group, please contact Sierra Club National's Member Care 415.977.5653 or member.care@sierraclub.org

Clearwater Conservation Committee / CCC

COUNTIES: Antrim, Benzie, Crawford, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Otsego, Roscommon and Wexford
FACEBOOK: Clearwater Conservation Committee
TWITTER: @NCMIClearwater
VICE CHAIR: Charlie Weaver • ctejedor@copper.net

Crossroads Group / CG

COUNTIES: Livingston and western Oakland
MEETS: at group leader homes in Livingston County or West Oakland Counties (first Thurs of the month)
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads
FACEBOOK: Crossroads Group Sierra Club
CHAIR: Lee Anzicek • leeanzicek@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR: Lee Burton, 810-231-9045 or lee.burton@michigan.sierraclub.org

Huron Valley Group / HVG

COUNTIES: Washtenaw, Lenawee and Monroe
MEETS: in Ann Arbor
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/huron
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Huron Valley Group
EMAIL: HVGSierraClub@gmail.com
CHAIR: Jason Frenzel • a2jasonfrenzel@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR: Anne Brown • aasbrown@gmail.com
OUTINGS CO-CHAIR: John Metzler • johnmetz@applecon.com
OUTINGS CO-CHAIR: Shonda Thoms • sktohm@gmail.com

Nepessing Group / NG

COUNTIES: Genesee, Lapeer, and North Oakland
MEETS: at Mott Community College in Flint
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/nepessing
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Nepessing Group - MI
CHAIR: Mike Buza • theoriginalzuba@yahoo.com
VICE CHAIR: Suzanne Lossing • slossing@hotmail.com

Southeast Michigan Group / SEMG

COUNTIES: Wayne, St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland
MEETS: Elks Club, 2401 E. Fourth, Royal Oak
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/semg
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Southeast Michigan Group
CO-CHAIR: Garrett Dempsey • garrett.dempsey@sierraclub.org
CO-CHAIR: Jerry Hasspacher • jhasspac@gmail.com

Southwest Michigan Group / SWMG

The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is planning on updating its structure, which will formally remove the Southwest Michigan Group as a sub-entity of the Michigan Chapter. Members are welcome to comment at our Chapter ExCom meeting in May 2022, before a final vote is taken. For details on the May meeting date, contact gail.philbin@sierraclub.org

Three Lakes Group / TLG

COUNTIES: Chippewa, Mackinac, Luce and Schoolcraft
MEETS: in Sault Ste. Marie
WEBSITE: tlgsierraclub.org
FACEBOOK: Three Lakes Group of Sierra Club
CHAIR: Roger Blanchard • blanchardclimate@gmail.com

Meetup With the Sierra Club

Meetup is a great way to check on the latest events sponsored by your local Sierra Club entity. Find the meetup page for your local group or committee below:

www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-South-of-the-Straits/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Three-Lakes-Group/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Huron-Valley/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Nepessing-Group-Michigan/

www.meetup.com/Metro-Detroit-Outdoors-Hiking/ (SEM Group)
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group/
www.meetup.com/SierraClubClearwaterGroup/
www.meetup.com/Metro-Detroit-Outdoors-Hiking/

“For Sale” Signs Threaten Michigan Forests

By Marvin Roberson, Forest Ecologist

Large corporations privately hold millions of acres of forest land in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. That has been the case for over a century but the situation has changed as the corporations sell their forest land, which in turn may end up in the hands of private developers.

For a long time, much of the private, industrial forest in the UP was owned by forest product manufacturers. Paper companies would own the paper mill. They also owned the forest land, which grew the timber to supply the mill.

This arrangement led to long-term stability in ownership and management. The paper company kept ownership of the forest land to ensure feedstock for the mills. They managed it consistently to produce the mix of feedstock they needed for the mill.

Forest managers did not always agree with these management strategies, but stable ownership and management were better than fragmentation of ownership and control caused by residential development.

Over the past decade or more, this arrangement has been changing as companies have sold their mills to out-of-towners. These long-distance owners decided that being in the mill business was different from the forest management business and sold off the forests to others.

Often, these new owners were REITS (Real Estate Investment Trusts) or TIMOs (Timber Investment Management Organizations) - essentially hedge funds that use forests as their investments. They are rarely in the business of owning parcels for more than 20 years.

A large portion of these private industrial lands will likely soon come up for sale. In fact, 34,000 acres (over 53 square miles) are currently listed for sale by a single owner in the Keweenaw Peninsula.



Forest at the Upper Peninsula's Brockway Mountain. PHOTO BY MARVIN ROBERSON

And this is just the beginning. Far more timberlands are likely to be available soon. It is crucial to get these lands in public hands as soon as possible. If sold off in parcels to private developers, the land will be fragmented forever.

This is not a "once in a lifetime" opportunity. This is a "once in forever" opportunity. If the opportunity is lost, it will be gone forever.

A broad group of environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club, is working on getting these lands in public hands and available to public use in perpetuity.

For the most current information on the issue and how to help, sign up to receive the Michigan Chapter Updates at sierraclub.org/michigan

SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Enclosed is my/our gift to the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter:
_____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 \$ _____ Other

Give online at www.tinyurl.com/supportMISC

Your donation helps provide the flexible funding Sierra Club needs to successfully advocate for Michigan's Great Lakes, wild heritage, and clean energy future.

Your contribution to Sierra Club is not tax-deductible; it supports our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. If you prefer to make a tax-deductible gift to support our work, call Development Director Jan O'Connell at 616-956-6646 to learn how.

Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter,
109 E. Cesar Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

Instead of a check, please charge my credit card
(VISA or MC) \$ _____.

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Healing The Great Lakes

By Erma Leaphart-Gouch, Healing Our Waters Coalition Michigan Co-Lead

The Great Lakes urgently need restoration and protection. This water basin contains 20% of the world's fresh surface water and 84% of the fresh surface water in North America and provides drinking water for 40 million people. The Great Lakes are significant to the well-being of people and the economies of the region and the country. The Great Lakes are true marvels. But looks can be deceiving as these wonders of nature face threats that need to be addressed.

To advocate for resources to tackle these problems, the Healing Our Waters – Great Lakes Coalition, a group of over 170 non-governmental partners and allies, hosts congressional visits during “Great Lakes Day.” These visits to Washington D.C. have changed to virtual meetings for the past two years. Stakeholders from Great Lakes states meet with members of Congress and their staff to share stories of the importance of the Great Lakes and the need for federal support for programs and policies to reduce toxins, address invasive species and toxic algal blooms, the need to replace aging water infrastructure, protect wetlands and assure clean water protections.

Fortunately, one of this year's messages is a huge thank you for the recently announced \$1 billion investment for cleanup and restoration of the Great Lakes from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill.



PHOTO: ANNE WOIWODE

These funds will be used to clean up the most environmentally degraded sites, known as “Areas of Concern.” The funds will accelerate environmental, economic, public health and other benefits throughout the Great Lakes region.

To join the Coalition, get involved and learn more, visit, healthylakes.org

Disaster Declaration Highlights Importance of Rain Gardens to the Rescue

By Elayne Elliott, Green Stormwater Infrastructure Community Organizer

In June 2021, rainfall ravaged Southeast Michigan, leading to a disaster declaration in Wayne County and bringing an influx of federal aid to the state. This incident highlighted the urgent need for improved stormwater infrastructure. The disaster declaration also emphasizes the importance of green stormwater infrastructure like the rain gardens installed in Detroit through Rain Gardens to the Rescue. One 2021 Rain Gardens to the Rescue participant explained that, “Installing a rain garden during a '500-year flood' gave me a deeper appreciation for the project. At first, I was focused on the benefits for pollinators and was excited to have one less section of grass to cut. I knew about the relief rain gardens have on the city's stormwater infrastructure but this was made even clearer to me when you see the damage flooding caused on homes and the pollution in our lakes and rivers.”

Established in 2015, Rain Gardens to the Rescue is a free, hands-on program that provides Detroit residents with the knowledge, skills and supplies they need to design and install their own rain gardens. Fed by downspouts on residential and nonprofit properties, gardens installed through this program feature plants native to Michigan that have long, deep roots, allowing water to more easily infiltrate. In 2021, 15



Some of the Rain Gardens to the Rescue participants who helped store more than 7,000 gallons of water in 2021.

households participated in a five-week course. The eight most dedicated students received free garden supplies and hands-on installation support. Combined in 2021, the rain gardens replaced 1,264 square feet of lawn while capturing water from 5,279 square feet of impervious surface and holding 7,388 gallons of water each time it rains! To learn more about the program, please visit tinyurl.com/2p84tswe

Toilet to Table: PFAS Pathways into Food

By Christy McGillivray, Political and Legislative Director

Toxic chemicals known as PFAS may be an uninvited guest at your dinner table.

PFAS are an almost indestructible class of chemicals that are both highly toxic and incredibly mobile once they are in the environment. PFAS are used in thousands of consumer products. There is no meaningful regulation that adequately oversees their manufacture and use. As a result, there are multiple pathways through which PFAS move into food. One of them is through the land application of leftover wastewater sludge on farmland. Sierra Club has been concerned about this contamination pathway for some time and was not surprised by the January 28, 2022, consumption advisory issued by the state for PFAS-contaminated beef from Grostic Farms. This disturbing development has sadly been a long time coming.

In 2019, Michigan Chapter leaders met with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) and shared recommendations on addressing the PFAS pathway into agriculture through the land application of sewage sludge. Volunteer Denise Trabbic-Pointer joined the Michigan Chapter team that year and began compiling data to build a mapping tool to track the land application of sewage sludge from wastewater treatments. Denise's map is going to prove extremely important in the coming months.

Sierra Club's recommendations included interagency cooperation to create protocols for testing soil and agricultural products. Since then, the Michigan PFAS Action Response Team

(MPART) convened a Land Application Workgroup with Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and MDARD which has tested biosolids from 42 wastewater treatment plants

out of the 400 operating statewide. Based on the data from that study, they conducted another study of the land application of biosolids from eight specific wastewater treatment plants to identify the impact of biosolids on the presence of PFAS in soil, surface water, groundwater and, potentially, agricultural products including livestock. Based on the results, Jason Grostic's livestock were identified as possibly contaminated by PFAS. MPART coordinated the follow-up investigation leading to the consumption advisory.

Sierra Club's recommendations from 2019 called for a rigorous biosolids testing

program and prohibition on the land application of biosolids with a dangerous amount of PFAS in them, and these recommendations are unchanged. The data and research released by MPART raises more questions that Sierra Club will ask of the agencies in the coming months.

The parties ultimately responsible for this food contamination are the chemical companies that manufacture these products and a broken regulatory system that requires proof of harm before taking a product off the market. This new data confirms that the solution to PFAS contamination lies upstream. These chemicals must be removed from the market. To join the effort around addressing PFAS contamination, email Christy at christy.mcgillivray@sierraclub.org.



Today's employees seek purpose at work. Helping employees discover and support the issues that matter to them is connected to increased engagement, higher levels of productivity and innovation and bottom-line business benefits. Caring for our air, water, land and wildlife rank as top priorities with today's workforce. That's why the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is a proud benefiting EarthShare Nonprofit Partner.

EarthShare is a leading network of environmental non-profits that gives businesses and employees across America effective ways to care for our natural resources and contribute to a sustainable future. EarthShare works with the corporate sector to create dynamic and relevant engagement and philanthropic experiences for employees, businesses and the communities where they live and work. Join the movement to accelerate the pace of positive environmental change!

In Michigan, Sierra Club has 29 EarthShare Nonprofit Partners, and donations can support all of them with a gift or can be designated to a single entity, like The Sierra Club Foundation, Michigan Chapter. Learn more about EarthShare at earthshare.org and view all of the EarthShare Nonprofit Partners in Michigan at sierraclub.org/michigan.

Questions? Contact gail.philbin@sierraclub.org

Moving Michigan Beyond Coal to Clean Energy

By Mike Berkowitz, Beyond Coal Campaign Representative

In 2022, we expect DTE's St. Clair and Trenton Channel coal plants to officially come offline. Since 2010 the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign has secured expedited retirement of 351 coal plants across the United States, including 23 units in Michigan. That's more than two-thirds of the country's coal fleet!

To kick off the year, we joined a handful of organizations grading Consumers Energy's 15-year plan. While they got an "A" for proposing to retire their J.H. Campbell coal plant in 2025, they missed the mark in nearly every other category, especially when it comes to fracked gas. Check out the full report card here: powerupmi.org/consumers-report-card/. Learn more and join our campaign to hold Consumers Energy accountable here: micleanconsumersenergy.com

We expect to spend the second half of 2022 focused on DTE, challenging their proposed rate hike and influencing their next 15-year energy plan, set to be released in October. DTE's last 15-year energy plan (presented in 2019) was very problematic, extending the life of coal uneconomically, building an unneeded fracked gas plant, undervaluing renewables and efficiency and raising costs on ratepayers over \$1 billion. We'll intervene and push DTE to propose a much more sustainable and cost-effective plan this time that moves beyond coal, maximizes



Sierra Club continues the fight to retire the state's coal-burning power plants.

efficiency, renewable energy and storage first and foremost instead of fracked gas.

Want to join our campaign to retire DTE's coal plants, stop their proposed gas plants and get them to invest in clean energy? Email mike.berkowitz@sierraclub.org

Things are Shaping Up in Grand Haven!

By Jan O'Connell, Energy Issues Organizer

Much has happened since the Grand Haven City Council pressed "pause" on the Board of Light and Power's (BLP) proposal to construct a fracked gas plant on Harbor Island. A few days later, the BLP itself abandoned the entire project due to lack of community support.

Four Sierra Club-endorsed candidates were the top two vote-getters in two races – for the BLP and the City Council, beating out two incumbents and bringing new energy and ideas to the two boards. The elections also highlighted Grand Haven's need for a sustainability plan, which five local citizens championed at the City Council's 2022-23 goal-setting meeting in January. The citizens explained the need for an energy resiliency plan, home retrofit projects, youth engagement in sustainability projects, composting throughout the city and establishing a Community Energy Plan. The sustainability plan should incorporate Grand Haven and Spring Lake Townships, the cities Ferrysburg and Grand Haven, and possibly Crockery and Robinson Townships.

Sustainability also drew the attention of Grand Haven's largest industry, Shape Corp., which recently set goals in place to reduce their energy usage 30% by 2025 and to source 100% of their energy from renewables by 2030.

As for Harbor Island, there has been an ongoing debate between the Grand Haven BLP and Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) about a clean-up



Sierra Club and concerned citizens work to keep Grand Haven beautiful and safe in the fight to clean up Harbor Island.

PHOTO: IAN HUTCHINSON - UNSPLASH

strategy for the property, including for coal ash (coal combustion residuals). The work has been delayed and much of it should have been done prior to the immense flooding of a couple of years ago. Other issues plaguing Harbor Island include the legacy of waste from the city dump years ago and the PFAS and PFOS contamination discovered in the Summer 2021. As of January of this year, the City Council and BLP have begun working together on a clean-up plan.

For more information and to get involved in Grand Haven energy advocacy work, email jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org or call 616-956-6646.

Whitmer and Nessel Face Fierce Political Battle Over Shut Down Order

By Christy McGillivray, Political and Legislative Director

Working together, Governor Whitmer and Attorney General Nessel used multiple legal angles to shut down the dangerous Line 5 oil pipeline that threatens the Great Lakes. They have revoked Enbridge's easement to operate Line 5 in the Straits of Mackinac, issued an order to seize Enbridge's assets for every day that they continue to operate illegally and they are fighting hard in court to force Enbridge to comply with the law. While Enbridge uses court delays to ignore Governor Whitmer's shut-down order, the Oil and Water Don't Mix campaign has shifted its focus to the federal government. The campaign urges President Biden to revoke the presidential permit allowing Enbridge to operate Line 5.

All of these actions are outstanding accomplishments. A grassroots campaign built enough power to convince the highest office holder in the state to side with citizens groups and shut down existing fossil fuel infrastructure. This action is unprecedented. Whitmer took on Enbridge to protect the Great Lakes, which means there is a lot on the line in 2022. Enbridge is spending millions of dollars in hopes of defeating Whitmer and her victory in November 2022 will demonstrate to other office holders around the country that it is possible to take on fossil fuel companies and win. The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter and its Oil and Water Don't Mix partners must do everything possible to guarantee that Governor Whitmer and Attorney General Nessel are able to out-campaign Enbridge's spending in the 2022 election.

Get involved with Sierra Club's political work to protect Governor Whitmer and Attorney General Nessel. Contact christymcgillivray@sierraclub.org



Governor Gretchen Whitmer

Build Back Better is the Key to Fighting Climate Change

By Sarah Tresseder, Federal Climate and Energy Organizer

This is our last best chance to act on climate.” That’s the rallying cry Sierra Club and environmentalists across the country use when talking about Build Back Better, the legislation containing the largest investments in climate action this country has ever seen. In November of 2021, the House passed the Build Back Better Act; unfortunately, the Senate has yet to pass these historic investments. It’s frustrating work, but the fight continues because it must. This is truly a do-or-die moment to pass federal laws to tackle the climate crisis.

Each day that passes without these investments is a day of needless stress and suffering for millions of people struggling with overstretched budgets, unabated air and water pollution, unaffordable healthcare and an onslaught of climate-fueled storms, wildfires and droughts. That’s a scary future that we can still avoid. There is a clear path forward for the transformational investments our communities and planet desperately need. Failure is quite simply not an option.

Of likely voters nationwide, 71% believe it is important for Congress to pass bold climate investments to deliver on President Biden’s goal of cutting U.S. climate pollution in half by 2030. The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is proud of federal lawmakers who support Build Back Better and climate action. As the midterm election cycle begins, Sierra Club will continue to fight for strong action on climate, which includes passing Build Back Better.



PHOTO: ANNE WOIWODE

Legislative Program Finds Success in 2021

By Tim Minotas, Legislative and Political Coordinator and Chapter Compliance Officer

2021 was a successful year for the Michigan Chapter's legislative program despite working remotely for most of the year and dealing with a state legislature hostile to the Sierra Club's priority issues. Sierra Club hosted three virtual lobby days of action with more than 340 participants, organized over 200 meetings with state legislators and helped over 80,000 people contact their lawmakers.

Legislative Highlights:

- Sierra Club helped stop the bad aggregate mining bill designed to take control away from local communities;
- Sierra Club volunteers made over 78,000 calls to Michigan voters encouraging more than 2,000 calls to the Michigan legislature urging opposition to voter suppression legislation.
- Helped draft and introduce a package of bills designed to prepare Michigan to deal with climate change; and
- Worked in collaboration with Sierra Club's healthy communities campaign to introduce bills protecting the Great Lakes and Michigan waterways from dangerous dock collapses.

In 2022, the Chapter legislative program put together a state legislative scorecard with Clean Water Action to hold lawmakers accountable and educate the public about how legislative actions have impacted Michigan's environment.

Political Program Successes In Key Local Elections

By Christy McGillivray, Political and Legislative Director

The Southeast Michigan Group worked tirelessly to help elect many candidates in the metro Detroit area during the 2021 local election season. Altogether, 25 out of 40 Sierra Club endorsed candidates won their races. Endorsed candidate Mikal Goodman won his race for Pontiac City Council and became the youngest person elected in the city's history. Former Sierra Club intern Josh Kofflin won a seat on the Milan City Council.

The biggest win of the night came in seats on the Grand Haven City Council and the Grand Haven Board of Light and Power for Sierra Club endorsed candidates Andrea Hendrick, Michael Westbrook, Kevin McLaughlin and Karen Lowe. These races are particularly important because community members have been working to block a polluting gas power plant project. With these voices on the City Council and the Board of Light and Power, the people of Grand Haven now have representatives who will fight to protect their air and water.

Want to help the Michigan Sierra Club achieve more success in 2022?

Email christy.mcgillivray@sierraclub.org and tim.minotas@sierraclub.org to get involved!

SUPPORT THE WORK OF SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGN

Enclosed is my/our gift to the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter:
_____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 \$_____ Other

Give online at bit.ly/SCMILegFund

Your donation helps support our Legislative work at the Capitol and across the state.

Your contribution to Sierra Club is not tax-deductible; it supports our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter,
109 E. Cesar Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip

Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Employer: _____

Occupation: _____

Protecting Democracy in 2022

By Christy McGillivray, Political and Legislative Director

Michigan Chapter members responded with resounding applause when Jocelyn Benson was named Sierra Club's Environmentalist of the Year in 2020 due to her efforts to protect our elections and support the expansion of ballot access – they understand the link between a healthy democracy and a healthy environment. This is why, in 2022 as in previous years, the Michigan Chapter is prioritizing expansion of ballot access for everyone in Michigan, while pushing back against the Big Lie and efforts to exploit disinformation to shut down our democracy.

Michigan is a high priority for Trump and his supporters, given the pivotal role that Biden's slim margin of victory played in the 2020 election and the national profile of our election certification process, which came under attack during what should have been routine processes at County and State Boards of Canvassers.

Insurrectionists like Meshawn Maddock within the state's Republican party continue to powerbuild in Michigan, and Trump's Save America PAC has prioritized local down ballot races in our State Legislature while backing anti-democracy candidates for Attorney General and Secretary of State.

With support from our national democracy team, the Michigan Chapter inspired hundreds of calls into the state legislature to stop the anti-democracy bills introduced after the 2020 election. Governor Whitmer has vetoed all bills discouraging voting, and Attorney General Nessel continues to prosecute proponents of the Big Lie that have broken the law to push their dangerous anti-democracy propaganda.

We know we can continue to count on Jocelyn Benson to guarantee free and fair elections in Michigan, and the Chapter will work with partners like Detroit Disability Power to make sure that voters facing barriers to casting their ballot get as much support as possible during the election. We encourage members concerned with election protection and integrity to sign up to be a Democracy MVP (election worker) with the Secretary of State. Sign up at: tinyurl.com/ms6u5h4v

For more information about Sierra Club Michigan's democracy work in 2022, email christy.mcgillivray@sierraclub.org or visit our website at: sierraclub.org/michigan/democracy-action



In 2021, the Michigan Chapter's Political Program fought against voter suppression proposals.
SIERRA CLUB FILE PHOTO

The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Hires Its First Communications Coordinator

The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is pleased to announce that Sarah Tresedder has been hired as the Chapter's first Communications Coordinator. Tresedder will oversee both traditional and digital media work, handle marketing, communications and press relations for the 55-year-old organization.

Tresedder has worked in various capacities with the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter since 2016, starting as an intern with the political program while earning a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and molecular biology and a minor in environmental studies from Michigan State University. Her most recent role at the Chapter has been as an organizer on climate and energy issues in West Michigan and at the federal level, during which time she completed studies for two Master degrees in Public Policy and Environmental Health.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to continue advancing the Sierra Club's mission to explore, enjoy, and protect this state," Tresedder says. "I hope to be a useful resource for the public, other organizations, and the media and look forward to helping achieve the Michigan Chapter's ambitious goals to make this state a leader in clean energy, environmental justice, and climate action."



Sarah Tresedder, the Michigan Chapter's New Communications Coordinator

Water Affordability and Access Need Federal and State Funding

By Christy McGillivray, Political and Legislative Director

Even though the necessity of running water for basic public health protections was widely acknowledged in early 2020, water shutoff programs have restarted in many cities around the state. Sierra Club supports the work of economist Roger Colton, which shows that income-based water bills bring in more money for utilities than shutoff programs. Water shutoff programs only place vulnerable low-income populations in further crisis by removing access to safe running water.

The only real solution for the water affordability crisis is proper funding for our infrastructure with federal and state dollars. We cannot rely entirely on individual rate payers. For context, when most of our drinking and wastewater systems were built, over 70% of the funding for this construction came from the federal

government. Today, the amount of funding is less than 10%. Punitive pricing and water shut offs in low-income neighborhoods don't fix our infrastructure shortfall, and instead will exacerbate public health problems and poverty. The huge influx of federal spending for infrastructure will address some of the need, but this money is a downpayment and not a long-term solution to the problem.

Sierra Club urges the passage of the People's Water Board Coalition's water affordability package, which has been introduced every state legislative session since 2015 by Senator Stephanie Chang. We also support revenue-raising measures at both the federal and state level for ongoing investment in drinking and wastewater.

Environmental Justice Organizers Fight EGLE Permit Process

By Mona Munroe-Younis, Michigan Chapter Environmental Justice Action Group

Environmental justice activists sprang into action when the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) posted a public notice for a polluting asphalt plant sited right next to a low-income majority-Black neighborhood in northeast Flint. This community has one of the highest asthma rates in the state. Environmental justice organizers in Flint worked closely with both the Great Lakes Environmental Law Center and Earthjustice to argue that EGLE must take into account the total burden of pollution when accounting for the hundreds of tons of air pollution dumped by Ajax Materials Corporation. EGLE granted the permit despite the strong show of public opposition and added impacts of toxic air pollution in an already burdened community.

In the past seven years, EGLE has only denied 11 of the over 1,700 air pollution permits filed. These pollution permits are overwhelmingly issued in communities with long-standing racial and economic disparities. Sierra Club fully supports the demands of Flint activists that when issuing new permits EGLE must use its existing authority to take into account the full scope of pollution a facility will contribute. With the coming boom in infrastructure repair from federal government support, Sierra Club expects to see similar permit clashes in other parts of the state. It is imperative that environmental groups prioritize the health of communities already suffering and take steps to protect public health for every Michigander.



Affordable Quality Solar Electric Provided by Local Firms Vetted by Sierra Club Michigan Chapter.

Find out how you can join the many Sierra Club Members and Supporters with solar installed through our program by contacting the Michigan Chapter Office.

GO SOLAR TODAY!

Carbon Offsets of Sierra Club Michigan's Solar Partnership Since 2015

- 350,096 lbs of Coal Burned
- 108 Tons of Landfill Waste
- 788,415 Miles Driven by Average Vehicle
- 5,600 Tree Seedlings Grown for 10 Years
- 12,070 Incandescent lamps switched to LEDs
- 35,752 Gallons of Gasoline Consumed

sierraclub.org/michigan/sierra-club-solar-partnership

Chapter Awards

Environmentalist of the Year: Larry Bell of Bell's Brewery

By Gail Philbin, Chapter Director

Larry Bell has been named Sierra Club Michigan's 2021 Environmentalist of the Year, the first time in the award's 30-year history the organization has chosen to honor a business owner who is not a philanthropist. Environmentalist of the Year is the group's highest honor.

Bell demonstrated his commitment to protecting the environment three years after Enbridge's massive 2010 oil pipeline rupture along the Kalamazoo River, when the Canadian oil transport giant decided to put toxic dredge from cleanup operations in Comstock Township. Enbridge didn't tell local officials and didn't have permits, so Bell, founder and president of Bell's Brewery, sued, forcing them to halt the dredge dumping operations that threatened to pollute the water and air near Bell's Comstock brewery. Bell went on to help create and lead the Great Lakes Business Network and spearhead the campaign among Michigan businesses to shut down Enbridge's Line 5 in the Straits of Mackinac.

"As a brewer, if I can't advocate for clean water, I don't know who can. That's our basic ingredient," Bell told the audience during the chapter's virtual awards ceremony on Feb. 5. He sold his iconic brewery in 2021 but plans to increase his environmental work. "I'm still dedicated to getting that damn pipeline out of the water!"



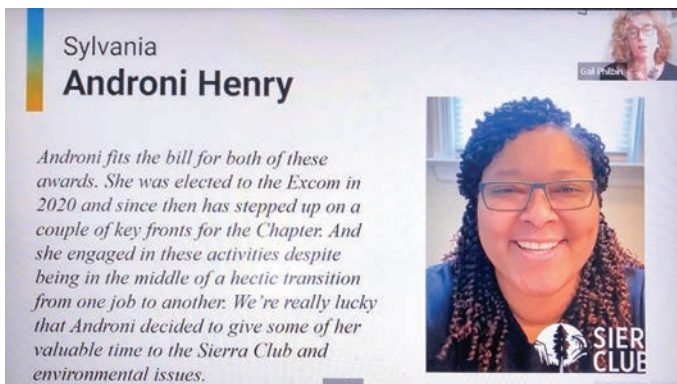
Larry Bell, Environmentalist of the Year

Fifteen other organizations and individuals received Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Awards on Feb 5:

Environmental Journalism Awards (2): Great Lakes News Collaborative, and Stephanie Cepak, a communications specialist with Byrum & Fisk Communications – both were honored for their work advancing environmental and energy issues within the news media.

Sylvania Award: Androni Henry, for hitting the ground running as a new Chapter volunteer and for bringing her medical knowledge to the fight for environmental justice and equal access to healthcare.

White Pine Award: Grand Haven Energy Organization, for helping stop a natural gas-fired electric power plant on Harbor Island.



A slide from the presentation during the Feb. 5 award ceremony.

White Pine Award: Urban Core Collective, for being the community's primary voice for environmental justice and anti-racism in Grand Rapids/West Michigan.

Lifetime Excellence Award: Helen LeBlanc, for 35 years of careful financial guidance as Chapter Treasurer.

Marlene Fluharty Award: Lee Burton, for building a dynamic and successful Crossroads Group through the energy he brings to programs, outings and projects.

Trillium Award: Spartan Sierra Club, for being a leading organization on the Michigan State University campus.

Theodore Roosevelt Political Leadership Award: Southeast Michigan Group Political Committee, for its immense effort leading up to the 2021 local elections.

Digital Excellence Award: Julie Geisinger, for creating a monthly compilation of engagement opportunities in the Line 5 Pipeline Newsletter.

Chapter Service Awards: Brad Kent, for taking over the Chapter's complex treasurer duties; Jane O'Neil, for her work with the Beyond Coal Campaign in Oakland County; and Denise Trabbic-Pointer, for helping Sierra Club members assess pollution issues.

Group Service Awards: Lori Dostal (Crossroads), Heather Sisto (Nepessing Group) and Vicki Olsen (Clearwater).

EXPENSES TO ADVANCE CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

In 2021, the Chapter spent \$848,312 to advance its conservation priorities. Of that, 72% went directly to pro-environment activities you care about. The remainder went to administrative aid for our programs and activities and helped secure funds to ensure the sustainability of the Chapter's critical work.



- Great Lakes 16%
- Forestry 11%
- Clean Energy 20%
- Political & Lobbying 14%
- EJ 8%
- Membership 3%
- Admin 13%
- Fundraising 15%

INCOME TO SUSTAIN CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

In 2021, the Chapter's income was \$1,023,049 and 3% came from a portion of your annual membership dues. The majority of our support comes from diverse fundraising activities such as direct and online mail appeals that yield vital donations and grant requests to foundations.



- Allocations 38%
Tax deductible and non deductible funds including bequests and non deductible lobbying
- Donations 26%
Both tax deductible and non tax deductible
- Nat'l SC Shared Project Grants 19%
- Other Grants / Misc 17%

This Annual Statement has not been audited. It includes only financial information about the Michigan Chapter's work and not information from the affiliated Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Political Committee.

Staying Strong In A Tough Year

By Gail Philbin, Chapter Director

In 2021, thousands of folks like you helped us stay strong throughout yet another challenging year, and we achieved important victories and remained in the fight to protect our natural resources, communities and democracy in the Great lakes State. Here's what we accomplished together:

POLITICAL

It was a year of local elections, and our Southeast Michigan Group worked tirelessly to help elect environmental candidates in the metro Detroit area. In total, 25 of 40 Sierra Club-endorsed candidates won their races! On the other side of the state, all of the candidates we endorsed in the Grand Haven Board of Light and Power and City Council elections won, adding strong voices for the environment to the mix.

LEGISLATIVE

In a virtual world, we still managed to get a lot done. An army of more than 340 activists phoned and emailed elected officials during three virtual Lobby Days and we set up over 200 meetings with legislators and helped 80,000+ people contact their lawmakers. Among other things, these efforts helped stop a bad aggregate mining bill designed to take away control from local communities and send a message to state legislators to oppose voter suppression efforts and to tell Congress to support the Build Back Better Act.

CLIMATE CHANGE/CLEAN ENERGY

We continued in our role as one of the leaders in the Oil & Water Don't Mix Coalition's fight to shut down Enbridge's Line 5 pipeline, bringing it closer than ever to victory. We celebrated the retirement of the Lansing Board of Water and Light's last remaining coal-burning unit of the Eckert Power Station, which resulted from our 2017 Clean Air Act suit settlement, and the shuttering of the River Rouge coal plant, also a result of decades of activism and a settlement by the Club.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

We supported frontline groups fighting a proposed asphalt plant in a Flint community already surrounded by polluting industry and others battling lead in water in Battle Creek. We maximized the intersections of our work in the Detroit region on environmental justice, fossil fuels, youth programs, green stormwater infrastructure, and water affordability to elevate and address frontline communities in the Tri-Cities region.

PROTECTING GREAT LAKES

Our green stormwater infrastructure work with Friends of the Rouge and Land & Water Works continued, with the installation of rain gardens, rain barrel distributions, and events being conducted with pandemic modifications. As a co-lead on Healing Our Waters in Michigan, we organized citizen lobbying opportunities with federal legislators and pushed for good Great Lakes policy. We assisted groups fighting efforts to water down the state's factory farm permit, which bans application of waste on frozen and snow-covered ground that leads to runoff and toxic algae.

FORESTS AND BIODIVERSITY

Our voice was heard at state and federal levels through sound scientific input and advocacy for good forest management. We monitored proposals ranging from new timber sales to a rocket launch "space port" near Marquette to determine their value and impact and if Sierra Club action was warranted.

Memorial And Bequests

In Memory of Jean McManus September 7, 1925 – April 8, 2021



Jean had a great appreciation for and love of nature and the outdoors. She spent part of her summers with her husband, Hugh, and their children at the family cottage in the northern reaches of Lake Champlain. Jean was a Sierra Club member for more than a half century and was active with the Michigan Chapter's Central Michigan Group for 20 years, serving as the chair in the 1990s. Jean had a particular interest in energy issues as well as a concern for endangered species and wildlife.

Both Jean and her husband were very closely associated with Michigan State University where Hugh was a professor of high energy physics and astronomy and Jean was a postdoctoral research scientist with many published scientific research papers involving analysis and investigation, resulting in treatments for malignant breast cancer. Jean was also a member of the Michigan State University Community Club of Creative Writers, which made a memorial contribution to the Michigan Sierra Club to honor Jean's life.

Patricia Teeter January 10, 1948 – February 23, 2021



Adrian native Patricia Teeter was an avid outdoors person who loved to camp and kayak with her dog. She worked for 34 years in the Saginaw Public Schools as an educator where she was instrumental in developing girls' athletic teams in basketball, volleyball and softball. During her coaching career, she impacted many young women who went to become college athletes.

Patricia wanted to be outside all the time, no matter the time of year. She was someone who always wanted to explore and do things, and conservation in the state she grew up in was very important to her. Because of this, she made a generous bequest to the Michigan Chapter to help protect the great outdoors of Michigan for future generations to enjoy.

Memorializing William and Kathleen Davis



William and Kathleen Davis, Sierra Club members for nearly 45 years, both passed away within five months of each other in the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021. Kathy had a career teaching biology and environmental studies and often took her students on trips to the AuSable River, Toronto Canada Science Center and on field study trips to Isle Royale. Several of her students became biologists, teachers and lifelong friends. Kathy was active in protecting the endangered piping plovers in Grand Marais where her and husband Bill had a summer home.

Bill was a long-time member of the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program and was also an environmentalist, accompanying Kathy on many scientific field trips. He was passionate about protecting nature and a social justice activist. Bill and Kathy loved traveling within the states and internationally, including a trip to Antarctica that turned out to be their last adventure together. Many of their trips involved nature conservation, land preservation and bird watching. Kathy recruited birders from Marquette and Northern Michigan University to be monitors protecting the piping plover during their nesting season.

Kathy and Bill not only worked to protect Michigan's environment in their lifetime, they remembered the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter in their estate plans, and the Chapter was blessed with a sizable gift to continue their support to preserve and protect Michigan's water wonderland.

CREATE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL LEGACY!

Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during their lifetime, but you can help preserve the environment for the future by remembering the Michigan Sierra Club and/or national Sierra Club in your estate plans or will. Bequests to the Michigan Chapter support the conservation work here in our state. This funding enables the Chapter to continue protecting the natural splendor of the Great Lakes State for years to come.

These gifts cost nothing now. You can hold on to your assets for as long as you need them and change beneficiaries at any time. Members who have named the Michigan Sierra Club and/or national Sierra Club as a beneficiary or would like to explore this idea further, contact Gail Philbin at gail.philbin@sierraclub.org or 616-805-3063.

EVERGREEN Program Ensures Support for Chapter Programs

Support for the Michigan Chapter with automatic monthly gifts through the EVERGREEN program is an easy way to ensure that Chapter programs are sustained. The additional contributions from members and supporters like YOU help protect Michigan's vulnerable wild lands and Great Lakes, keep our air and water clean, and promote solutions that fight climate change. These donations add up quickly and are an easy way to ensure that the Chapter's programs continue. Please consider an EVERGREEN monthly gift to the Michigan Sierra Club today. Just visit: tinyurl.com/2d86s4jc. Questions? Email gail.philbin@sierraclub.org or call 616-805-3063.



The Sierra Club's members and supporters are 3.8 million of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet.

The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

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Supporting Your Chapter

Sierra Club's Michigan Legacy Council

Sierra Club established its Michigan Legacy Council to honor individuals, groups and organizations making significant gifts to the Michigan Chapter. Their partnership and commitment to our work leaves a lasting legacy. This list is current as of our publication date. Please join us in thanking the current listing of Michigan Legacy Council members:

FENS & SAPPLINGS \$500-\$999

- Carrie Aikman
- Richard M Barron
- Charles Stephen Baum Endowment
- David & Joyce Benjamins
- Susan Blower
- Peggy Bocks
- David Bolig
- Joanne Cantoni
- Laurie Chaney
- Philip Crookshank
- Estate of Esther Dean
- Larry Deck & Pat Frey
- Gary & Linda Dekock
- Patricia & Gerald DeMaire
- Earthshare of Michigan
- Aghogho Edevbie
- Sarah Ensign
- Daniel Farough & Manjola Cabej
- Mr Mark Ferguson
- Betsy Foote
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- Carola Gerigk
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- Nachy Kanfer
- Doug Kik
- Karen & Joe Kimmell
- Richard & Patricia Kirschner
- Steven & Kathleen Kopitz
- Jay Korinek

- Bernice Lamkin
- Janet Lee
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- Patrick Maceroni
- Ms Laura McEnery
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- Emma Strelbel & Kathy Klausner
- Bradley & Kathryn Sullivan
- Timon P Tesar
- Antoinette St Pierre
- Emma Strelbel & Kathy Klausner
- Paul Thielking
- Dawn Thomas
- Steven & Laura Trizenberg
- Carol Urbanus
- John & Connie Wesley
- Regina & John Wilson
- Brenda Whalen
- James R & Diana Wright
- Raymond Ziarno

STREAMS & WHITE PINES \$1,000-\$2,499

- Patrice Aaron
- Tom & Judy Bastien
- Catherine A Beal

- Mr Lorne Beatty
- Curt Bechler
- Paul & Louise Borucki
- Elaine A Bridges
- Mr Matthew Brown
- Elizabeth Burns & Roger Zinser
- Lee Burton & Roberta Shaw-Reeves
- Gloria Byle & Larry Byle (posthumously)
- Connie Cronenwett
- David & Carol Diephuis
- Mary Fielding
- Joanne Domres Folsom
- Patrick Egan
- Carol Graham-Banes
- David Hamilton
- Denise Harris
- Susan & David Hoekema
- David Justin
- Susan Kelly
- Richard & Katherine Kinase
- Samuel & Patricia Lacina
- Laurel Leone
- Herbert & Karla Linkner
- Jeremy Lopatin
- Mark Makulinski
- John McGarry
- Michigan League of Conservation Voters
- Mindy Miller
- Rita Mitchell & Ed Steinman
- Thomas & Jill Newhouse
- Jan & Dennis O'Connell
- Janet Olszewski
- Gail & John Philbin
- John & Janice Rebers
- Kenneth Rosenman & Martha Stanbury
- William & Elizabeth Salot
- Lorraine Sigle
- Henry S Spenski Jr

- Rosemary Tinetti
- Fred & Alycema Townsend
- Annalieda Tuck
- Rita Vadasz
- Todd S Wilkinson
- Anonymous Donors (4)

RIVERS & GROVES \$2,500-\$4,999

- James & Cynthia Berkey
- Deborah Miesel
- Dr Sherman & Julie Shultz
- Anonymous Donors (2)

DUNE & SHORELINES \$5,000-\$7,499

- Mike Keeler & Sherry Hayden
- Helen & Al LeBlanc
- Judith A Lindberg
- Gwen & John Nystuen
- Kathy Sneden

MARSHES & PRAIRIES \$7,500-\$14,999

- Mr & Mrs Larry Bell
- Jean Gramlich
- Nancy Shiffler

GREAT LAKES & GREAT FORESTS

- \$15,000+
- Ceci Bauer & Tim Flynn
- Thomas Buhr
- Estate of William & Kathleen Davis
- Erb Foundation
- Detroit Future City
- Friends of the Rouge
- Jenkins Foundation
- Mr John R Hunting
- Estate of Patricia Teter
- Wege Foundation
- Tom & Anne Woiwode